Examiners' Report
Lead Examiner Feedback

January 2022

Pearson BTEC Nationals
In Performing Arts (31561H)
Unit 7: Employment Opportunities in the Performing Arts

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Grade Boundaries

What is a grade boundary?

A grade boundary is where we set the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade, at Distinction, Merit and Pass.

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the external assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries – this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark is for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to ensure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

Variations in external assessments

Each external assessment we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries for each assessment, because then it would not take accessibility into account.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, are on the website via this link:
http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html

Awarding BTEC qualifications in 2022

Ofqual has set out their plans for awarding qualifications in 2022 and intend to return to a normal, pre-pandemic, approach to grading standards over by 2023. They have confirmed that 2022 will be a transition year, to reflect that we are in a pandemic recovery period and students' education has been disrupted.

Our guiding principle and approach to awarding BTEC qualification results in 2022 will be to ensure parity in relation to the approach being taken for GCSE and A level learners. BTEC courses have a different structure and design to academic qualifications - BTECs are modular qualifications (with assessments taking place throughout the course) compared to GCSEs and A levels which are linear (assessed and awarded at the same time at the end of the year), and therefore our approach needs to be different.

In 2022 we will return to the usual method of calculating BTEC qualification results, however adaptations including, U-TAGs and reduced internal assessment, are in place to provide a comprehensive package of support for students.

The basis of our awarding approach to BTECs this year is to ensure it is as fair as possible for all learners. We will use a range of evidence to set grade boundaries for the external units. Part of this evidence will be to closely monitor learner performance in all assessments that contribute to learners' final qualification grade, to ensure parity with A level and GCSEs.

Further information can be found on our website and via our Social Media channels.

Unit Code: Unit title

Grade	Unclassified	Level 3			
		N	P	M	D
Boundary Mark	0	10	20	31	42

Introduction

Unit 7 (31561H) Employment Opportunities in Performing Arts is a mandatory externally assessed task on the BTEC National Extended Diploma in Performing Arts.

This unit requires learners to respond to a set task in the form of a response to an employment opportunity, this employment opportunity changes each series.

In the response, learners must fully consider all aspects of the employment opportunity, including the organisational profile, the performance project outline, and the workshop requirement. Learners are required to submit a written response and a digital promotional portfolio.

The written response should be up to 2000 words and the digital promotional portfolio should be up to 10 minutes of video /audio material and can include up to 10 photographs/images and written supporting materials of up to 750 words.

The set task is marked out of 60. The written response is marked out of 36 and the digital promotional portfolio out of 24.

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

Learner responses seen this series showed that the set task was accessible for learners, and it presented a similar level of demand to the previous set tasks relating to this paper.

The employment opportunity included a similar number of features that learners could consider and respond to, in order to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding relating to employment opportunities in the performing arts.

Learners were able to give consideration to the organisation, the performance project and the workshop requirements. The three key components of the employment opportunity provided a realistic vocational employment opportunity that could be responded to with knowledge, skills and experience that could have been gained through the study of this and other units from the specification.

Learner responses that were most successful overall included a written response underpinned with relevant research and a digital promotional portfolio with carefully selected and relevant examples of work.

Employment opportunity

The employment opportunity for this series was to join *Reimagine Performance Company* for their *1825* performance project.

This employment opportunity provided learners with the opportunity to respond as a potential applicant and to demonstrate their understanding of the organisation and the performance project and to suggest ideas for the workshop. Learners could apply as a practitioner from across the performing arts disciplines and demonstrate their understanding of how to promote themselves.

The set task assesses learners across the following assessment outcomes:
AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the purpose, structure and work of performing arts organisations
AO2: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of professional practice in relation to employment opportunities in the performing arts
AO3: Apply knowledge and understanding of professional practice to meet the needs of performing arts organisations
AO4: Be able to respond to an employment opportunity in a performing arts context with appropriate justification

Individual Questions

Activity 1: Written Response

The written response should be written in a such a way it will persuade *Reimagine Performance Company* to consider the applicant (the learner) for the job.

In this activity the learner will need to demonstrate their understanding of *Reimagine Performance Company* as an organisation, their understanding of the *1825* performance project and their understanding of the workshop requirements.

The following extracts are taken from good learner responses. There is no single correct way to demonstrate knowledge and understanding, but it is

hoped the following extracts will be helpful and inform what is being looked for in the written response for this unit and task.

Extract 1

This shows an appreciation of the type of organisation and goes beyond repeating what is given in the task.

I personally take an interest in the structure of the company as it is a community interest company (CIC), which is a special form of a non-charitable limited company, this benefits the community but delivers no additional profit to the owners. This further reinforces the idea of an inclusive approach and how performing arts can add value to everyone's lives because it implies the company is more focused on providing benefits to the community rather than to themselves. Ostensibly, this appeals to me as a candidate as growing up, sometimes funding performing arts training was a challenge and I believe for some people, performing arts training may not have been accessible for them due to financial reasons so having a company that provides free training of the arts to a wide audience of young people really makes me want to take part and provide the love and happiness I received from the arts to the community.

Extract 2

This shows an appreciation of some of the wider context for the type of organisation.

'One of the many fundamental reasons that I would be delighted to work with you is your company structure and core values as a social enterprise. The fact that you are a 'Community Interest Company', which prioritises and directs profit towards the good of the public, and the benefit of well being, as opposed to maximising profits for the business owners and shareholders really stands out to me as a member of this community. This makes the opportunity of working with you even further appealing, as actively working with the public to genuinely improve their prospects and mental health is something that I find incredibly important, and something that I feel needs to be increased. As well as this, I also believe that the presence of the 'not-for-profit distribution status' makes your company extremely trustworthy and reliable, and a shared, genuine concern and passion for helping others means a lot to me'.

Extract 3

This extract shows an appreciation of funding, relevant to the organisation.

'I've researched more about the funding and I have a better understanding of the organisation and how the funding works. As a public sector funding organisation. I believe that you rely on taxes and grants. Grants (which also includes 'The National

Lottery') Local authorities and the UK government may also give grants towards the arts as payback to their community, they are also limited to be used in a certain amount of time. Grants are carefully monitored and need to have proof that it is being used for the correct reasons, for example, video evidence, written reports and budgets. Therefore, it would require writing and IT skills, also, the role would need someone who could handle the ability to lead cost effective workshops. I have planned my workshop to be at no or low cost if need be as I will only be needing people and a space to rehearse'.

Extract 4

This extract includes relevant skills and experience and demonstrates knowledge and understanding of promotional intent.

Another reason why I would be an appropriate candidate for this job role is that I have partnered with and participated in many community projects in the past, so I will both know how to properly approach and contribute to this project but will also know what I would like to receive from a community project. I have worked with a local company that provided a taster session for dance classes where I taught two dance workshops and provided choreography for the class with mixed ability dancers, some who have had experience and some who wanted to take a class and be invited to a world of dance. Not only was it involving the community through taking part in this local event, but all proceedings were given to mental health charity. I also attended and danced alongside my peers at a charity-based event where all donations were given towards various children-based charities.

Extract 5

This extract shows an appropriate way to communicate ideas for the workshop requirement.

I led workshops with a group of young beginners, and this taught me many of the skills I have today. Working with beginners was challenging at times yet it taught me that patience is key when working with others. It also taught me that when you're leading a workshop, it's important to adapt to a pace that the participants are comfortable with. Because they were beginners, I went through the foundations of dance and introduced them to the common elements in a dance routine (dancing in unison, different types of canons, spacing & formations etc.) The feedback I received after the performance was excellent and everyone congratulated me for putting together such great routines. This experience and the skills I gained from it prove I can lead workshops like the ones that will underpin your '1825' performance project.

Overall, in good written responses we saw:

- Full analysis of all aspects of the employment opportunity.

- Complete understanding the employment opportunity, including an in-depth appreciation of the organisational profile, project outline and workshop requirements.
- Ideas were clearly and consistently linked to the employment opportunity.
- Links between skills and experience and the employment opportunity.
- Promotional intent and the response overall was likely to engage the employer.
- The contents of the report were clearly communicated with effective and relevant use of technical language.
- Clear examples of ideas, skills and experience being communicated in a persuasive manner.
- Examples of relevant skills and experience included and linked to the demands and requirements of the employment opportunity.
- Workshop ideas were clear, relevant and linked to the context of the given opportunity.

Activity 2: Digital Promotional Portfolio

The Digital Promotional Portfolio is an opportunity for learners to demonstrate their skills and experience as part of their response to the employment opportunity.

Learners should select and include relevant extracts of their practical work that will persuade *Reimagine Performance Company* to include them in the *1825* performance project and workshops. Learners should consider specific requirements of the organisation, the performance project and the workshop. They should show examples that clearly link skills and experience to the key factors of the employment opportunity.

The digital promotional portfolios varied in terms of style and format. There is no fixed 'best way' to put the portfolio together. However, the following observations from the work seen this series will hopefully inform how best to respond and present work for this activity.

- Some of the showreels were still far too long with some lengthy pieces of text or performance that were very general and did not identify the candidate specifically. It should only take a few minutes for skill levels to be established and longer recordings quickly become inappropriate and can detract from the purpose of the set task.

- Showreels and other forms of presentations worked well where there were clear references to the demands of the task, including a balance between showing performance skills and experience as workshop leaders.

- Some learners were enthusiastic about passing their skills on to others, but practical ideas and skills presented in example workshops were clearly too demanding for the profile of participants set out in the task and in some cases contradicted the aims of the company.

- Some responses relied far too heavily on the work of existing companies, sometimes replicating this work in their own workshops in a way that simply copied what they had experienced and neglected to take account of what was being asked of them in the set task.

- Some responses became very practitioner focused, for example linking theatre practitioners with specific parts of the set task, i.e. Boal with community theatre, Brecht with strong social and political content and Grotowski with non-theatre spaces. Some candidates imbued this approach with explicit references to the flexibility and openness of the Re-Imagine Company, but it sometimes became very formulaic and repetitive.

- Some candidates presented portfolios that included a range of formats such as photographs, CVs. Certificates, ppts and recordings. These portfolios sometimes lost coherence and in part lacked promotional intent.

- Voice-overs and narratives direct to camera introducing recordings generally worked well and gave portfolios a promotional intent.

It should be noted that ion successful responses, we saw:

- Fully appropriate ideas with clear and effective promotional intent.
- Ideas clearly linked to the organisation and project.
- Evidence of selection, refinement, and use of relevant examples.
- Skills and experience presented in a way that is likely to engage the employer.

Examples of learner work that did very well were entirely consistent with the ideas, skills and experience outlined in the written response and formed a coherent and persuasive response. They were fully refined and provided potentially successful 'applications' to the employment opportunity overall.

Administration

It is appreciated that centres submitted learner work in line with requirements.
Centres should fully observe the demands of both the task for the specific examination series and the requirements as detailed in the instructions within the Set Task Brief and as outlined in the Administrative Support Guide.

Work was mostly submitted by the deadline and in the correct format in terms of recordings and pdf files. Each learner's work must be presented in its own folder and should include the written response and the digital promotional portfolio with any supporting material.

Once the written response has been completed it should be converted and saved as a pdf document. It is not necessary to include both a Word and a PDF version of the written response.

Recordings were generally of a good quality however it is essential a learner can be identified in the practical work included in the digital portfolio. There is no requirement to save a pdf version of the content of the portfolio.

Please note *learners should not include their personal contact details, such as email addresses and mobile numbers. It is acceptable to use centre details when wanting to include contact information on promotional materials such as CV's.*

Summary

Based on the performance seen during this series the following should be considered:

- The starting point should be the teaching and learning of the unit content, which should be covered in preparation for the set task. This will be helpful for learners to be able to respond to the specific type of organisation, project and workshop requirements detailed in the employment opportunity.

- Centres should prepare learners to respond to the employment opportunity as a whole, considering the organisational profile, the project outline and the workshop requirements.

- There should be evidence of the learner's critical selection of material for the portfolio. Learners should analyse the relevance of their skills and experience in line with the specific employment opportunity.

- Learners will need access to recordings of their practical work, as part of their selection process for their portfolio. If they would like to create new work for the employment opportunity, that is acceptable.

- Promotional intent should be given sufficient consideration, with learners having an awareness of current industry practice as much as possible.

- Additional material, such as certificates, references and publicity should only be included in the portfolio if relevant.
- It is important learners can be easily identified in their digital portfolio.
- The written response and the digital promotional portfolio should form a coherent overall response to the employment opportunity.

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